ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 11| November 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

HYDERABAD KARNATAKA LIBERATION: A COMPLEX HISTORICAL AND SOCIOPOLITICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The Hyderabad Liberation Struggle of 1948 stands as a pivotal chapter in India's struggle for independence, yet its historical significance and the complexities surrounding its commemoration continue to resonate deeply. This paper explores the multifaceted dimensions of the liberation of Hyderabad, delving into its socio-political context, the role of key leaders, and the legacy it holds in the collective memory of India. By examining historical narratives and contemporary reflections, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of an event that continues to shape regional identities and political discourse in modern India. The study examines the impact of the Hyderabad liberation on local communities, particularly Muslims, addressing the sensitivities and narratives that have emerged over decades. This study not only contributes to the academic understanding of Indian's independence movement but also serves as an important contribution to broader debates on nationalism, communalism, and state formation in post-independence India.

KEYWORDS: *Hyderabad Liberation Struggle, India's Independence Movement, Socio-Political Context, Key Leaders, Collective Memory, Regional Identities, Political Discourse, Communalism and State Formation.*

INTRODUCTION

The Hyderabad Liberation Struggle of 1948 stands as a pivotal chapter in India's struggle for independence, yet its historical significance and the complexities surrounding its commemoration continue to resonate deeply. Rooted in the resistance against the autocratic rule of the Nizam and the fanaticism of Kasim Razvi's Razakars, the liberation of Hyderabad was not merely a military conquest but a decisive assertion of India's unity and secular fabric. Led by visionary leaders such as Swami Ramananda Tirtha, the movement not only thwarted the specter of Hyderabad becoming a South Pakistan but also laid the groundwork for the reorganization of states along linguistic lines, ensuring lasting peace and stability in the region.

Despite its historical importance, the commemoration of Hyderabad's liberation has been marred by controversies and political sensitivities, particularly concerning its portrayal and impact on local communities, notably Muslims. This paper explores the multifaceted dimensions of the Hyderabad Liberation Struggle, delving into its socio-political context, the role of key leaders, and the enduring legacy it holds in the collective memory of India. By examining historical narratives and contemporary reflections, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of an event that continues to shape regional identities and political discourse in modern India.

Importance of the Study

The study of the Hyderabad Liberation Struggle of 1948 holds significant importance in understanding not only the historical dynamics of India's independence movement but also its enduring impact on regional politics and communal relations. This research sheds light on a critical period when Hyderabad, under the Nizam's rule and the influence of Kasim Razvi's Razakars, became a focal point of resistance against feudalism and religious fanaticism.

Firstly, the Hyderabad Liberation Struggle represents a unique phase in India's post-independence history, highlighting the complexities of integrating princely states into the newly formed republic. By examining the military campaign led by the Indian Army under the leadership of General J.N. Chaudhuri, the study illustrates the strategic and tactical challenges faced in securing Hyderabad's accession to India.

Secondly, the role of leaders like Swami Ramananda Tirtha underscores the ideological underpinnings of the struggle, emphasizing the quest for secularism and national unity amidst communal tensions. The movement's insistence on linguistic reorganization, as advocated by Swami Ramananda Tirtha, paved the way for the eventual formation of linguistic states, reshaping India's administrative map and fostering linguistic and cultural identities.

Moreover, the study explores the impact of the Hyderabad Liberation on local communities, particularly Muslims, addressing the sensitivities and narratives that have emerged over decades. By critically analyzing historical records and contemporary reflections, the research aims to provide a balanced perspective on how the liberation has been remembered and

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commemorated, offering insights into its implications for contemporary socio-political discourse.

In conclusion, this study not only contributes to the academic understanding of India's independence movement but also serves as a critical reflection on the complexities of post-colonial nation-building, secularism, and communal harmony. By examining the Hyderabad Liberation Struggle through multiple lenses, the research seeks to enrich our understanding of historical events that continue to shape India's diverse socio-cultural landscape.

Research Gap

Despite extensive historical documentation and commemorations surrounding the Hyderabad Liberation Struggle of 1948, several gaps persist in scholarly discourse that merit further investigation:

1. **Narratives and Communal Memory**: Existing literature often focuses on the broader military and political dimensions of the Hyderabad Liberation. However, there remains a notable gap in understanding how different communities, particularly Muslims, perceive and remember the events of 1948. Exploring these narratives could provide a more nuanced understanding of communal relations and historical memory in post-independence India.
2. **Role of Regional Leaders**: While the role of national leaders like Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel and Swami Ramananda Tirtha is well-documented, there is a need for deeper exploration into the contributions and perspectives of local leaders, activists, and ordinary citizens who participated in or were affected by the struggle. Their voices and experiences can enrich our understanding of grassroots movements and local dynamics during the liberation period.
3. **Impact on Socio-Political Integration**: The aftermath of Hyderabad's integration into India had profound socio-political implications, including the reorganization of states along linguistic lines. However, there is limited scholarly analysis on how this integration impacted regional identities, administrative governance, and socio-economic development in Hyderabad and surrounding regions.
4. **Historiographical Perspectives**: The historiography of the Hyderabad Liberation often reflects dominant narratives shaped by political agendas and commemorative practices. A critical analysis of these historiographical perspectives and the construction of memory could reveal biases, omissions, and conflicting interpretations that influence public discourse and historical understanding.

Addressing these research gaps not only enriches our understanding of the Hyderabad Liberation Struggle but also contributes to broader debates on nationalism, communalism, and state formation in post-independence India. Future research endeavors should strive to explore these dimensions comprehensively to provide a holistic view of this pivotal historical episode.

Objectives of the Study

1. To investigate communal memories of the Hyderabad Liberation among Muslims, exploring implications for post-independence communal relations.
2. To Document the roles of local leaders and grassroots movements in the Hyderabad Liberation, offering insights into local dynamics.
3. To analyze the socio-political impacts of Hyderabad's integration into India, focusing on linguistic reorganization and regional identities.
4. To critically analyze historiographical narratives on the Hyderabad Liberation, examining biases and interpretations that shape historical understanding.

By achieving these research objectives, the study aims to contribute comprehensively to the historical scholarship on the Hyderabad Liberation Struggle, offering insights into nationalism, communalism, and state formation in India's post-independence history.

Methodology

The required data information has been collected from secondary sources such as gazetteer, books, journals, dissertations, theses, magazines, daily newspapers and online resources.

ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

Background of the Liberation Struggle

For around 216 years, the Asaf Jahi dynasty ruled the Hyderabad State. Mir Osman Ali Khan, Jung Bahadur, was the last ruler of this dynasty. The rulers of Hyderabad were commonly referred to as the Nizam administration. The Hyderabad State encompassed areas such as Kalaburagi, Bidar, and the undivided Raichur (including Koppal) districts, which are known today as the Hyderabad Karnataka region. It also included areas now part of Telangana: Hyderabad, Nizamabad, Adilabad, Khammam, Warangal, Mahabubnagar, Karimnagar, and Nalgonda, along with the surrounding areas. Additionally, it covered 16 districts in Maharashtra, including Parbhani, Beed, Nanded, Osmanabad, and Aurangabad.

Under his rule, the citizens never faced hardships. He implemented numerous welfare schemes that the older generations still remember fondly. In the 25th year of his reign, he constructed a highway between Kalaburagi and Bidar. The grand stone bridge built over the Benethora River on this route remains sturdy even today. He also established a direct route between Kalaburagi and Raichur, lined with rows of mango and tamarind trees that provided both shade and fruit. Along this road, wells were constructed for travelers to rest and quench their thirst. These century-old wells can still be found in places along this route. A large bridge was also built over the Krishna River at the border separating Kalaburagi and Raichur districts, which still stands today.

With the development of transportation systems, he constructed Ganj (wholesale market areas) and cement roads connecting these markets to railway stations in Kalaburagi, Bidar, and Raichur

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districts to boost trade. No one can forget these contributions. A well-equipped road was built to the capital, Hyderabad, with trees planted on both sides and wells constructed at intervals for travelers. These visible collective welfare works and many other public interest projects were carried out during the Nizam's reign. Even though the Nizam was a Muslim, the majority Hindu population of the Hyderabad region also held him in high regard.

The conflict between the Hyderabad Nizam and the people began when the Nizam became a puppet of the British. Hyderabad was an independent state but later became a British vassal, falling under their administration. A fierce struggle against the British was taking place across the country under the leadership of Mahatma Gandhi. Congress supporters started a similar struggle against the British in the Hyderabad region. The Nizam, who lived harmoniously with Hindus, found it challenging to control the fighters. When followers of Mahatma Gandhi fought against the British in Hyderabad, it was seen as a rebellion against the Nizam. This led to a conflict between the Nizam's government and the public.

Religious Fanaticism

In this harmonious situation, a religious fanatic named Qasim Razvi founded an organization called 'Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen' and convinced the Nizam that by converting the majority Hindu population under his rule, Hyderabad could become an Islamic state. Despite the Nizam being a Muslim, 80% of the population in the Hyderabad State were Hindus. The citizens never saw the Nizam through the lens of religious division, and the Nizam himself never discriminated against Hindus. However, Razvi convinced the Nizam that if all the people were converted to Islam, Hyderabad could become an Islamic state, ensuring the Nizam's government's safety. Consequently, forced conversions began through heinous acts of injustice, rape, and violence against Hindus. Many lower-caste and impoverished people were forcibly converted.

Organizations like Arya Samaj and Hindu Mahasabha strongly opposed this and started a movement to reconvert those who had been forced into Islam back to Hinduism. Qasim Razvi formed an armed volunteer group called 'Razakars' to carry out forced conversions across the Hyderabad region. The Nizam government, keen on retaining power, danced to Razvi's tune, using state funds for conversions. Though all this happened under the shadow of the Nizam's administration, the Nizam maintained a silent agreement, focusing solely on retaining power. However, Hindus never distanced themselves from the Nizam. They began opposing the atrocities of Razvi's Ittehad-ul-Muslimeen organization. Hindus, unable to tolerate the violence, grew enraged and began to resist fiercely.

Direct conflict between Hindus and Muslims started after India's independence, that is, after August 15, 1947. When the British left the country, they sowed the seeds of division by partitioning the nation into Hindustan and Pakistan. At the same time, the over 500 independent princely states were given the option to join Pakistan, join the Indian Union, or remain independent. Many rulers of these states wished to maintain their independence. Among these was the Nizam of Hyderabad (Mir Osman Ali Khan, Jung Bahadur), who, on Qasim Razvi's advice, refused to merge with independent India and declared that Hyderabad would remain an independent state.

The Second Freedom Struggle

On the day of India's independence, while the sounds of freedom celebrations echoed everywhere, the Nizam, listening to Qasim Razvi, aimed to turn this region into a southern Pakistan. This declaration by the Nizam shocked countless freedom fighters and patriots. All the freedom lovers of the Hyderabad region were infuriated by the Nizam's decision, marking the beginning of the Hyderabad Liberation Struggle. If India's freedom struggle was one chapter, the liberation struggle of Hyderabad became another. The people of this region, who had once fought against the British under Mahatma Gandhi's leadership, had to engage in another 13-month struggle under Swami Ramanand Tirtha for the liberation of Hyderabad.

For the national leaders who participated in the Indian independence movement and sacrificed everything, driving out the British was not their only goal. They envisioned a united India. They believed that if the princely states remained independent, their struggle would be meaningless. Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, the then Home Minister and Deputy Prime Minister known as the "Iron Man," summoned the rulers of all the small princely states wishing to remain independent. He persuaded them to merge with the Indian Union by assuring them that the Indian government would continue to honor their royal privileges. Most states joined the Union, but the Nizam of Hyderabad, Mir Osman Ali Khan, refused Patel's proposal, insisting that Hyderabad remain an independent state. Therefore, the liberation struggle against the Nizam became inevitable, lasting from August 15, 1947, to September 17, 1948—about 13 months. This can be called the second freedom struggle.

After independence, to suppress this liberation movement and prevent any dissent against his rule, the Nizam's government collectively imprisoned all freedom fighters and banned the Congress party in the Hyderabad region.

In the name of the Nizam government, the Razakars were committing atrocities, which were being reported verbatim by the editor of the Urdu newspaper 'Imroz' in Hyderabad, Shoaib Khan. Declaring him a traitor, the Razakars killed him in broad daylight in the middle of a Hyderabad street, announcing it as a public punishment for treason against Islamic rule. They declared that anyone who raised their voice against the Nizam was committing treason against Islam. All these developments testified that the Nizam was not biased towards Muslims, but was simply making irrational decisions to maintain his power.

Many Muslim organizations condemned Shoaib Khan's public assassination and held a large procession in Hyderabad. However,

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Volume: 11| Issue: 11| November 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

Qasim Razvi and the Razakars did not relent. Even though the procession consisted of Muslims, they labeled them as anti-Islam and anti-religion, and issued death threats without distinguishing between Hindu and Muslim voices raised against the atrocities. They created fear among the public and protestors by kidnapping some leaders. They fostered an atmosphere of fear in Hyderabad to prevent anyone from raising their voice against the Nizam.

Additionally, they imposed a ban on newspapers reporting any atrocities or other political activities in the Hyderabad region. Furthermore, any newspaper published in independent India was banned from entering the Hyderabad region. Those who imported and read newspapers from outside were hanged. Newspaper agents were publicly flogged, and the Razakars threatened them with religious punishment, calling it punishment for betraying religion.

In a way, Qasim Razvi, without the Nizam's knowledge, began to act arbitrarily with his Razakar force, enforcing a sort of uncivilized law. Due to the atmosphere of fear in the entire Hyderabad region, it became difficult to organize freedom fighters. The voices raised in protest were hanged or publicly shot like in Taliban-administered Afghanistan, causing the entire population of the Hyderabad state to tremble. Many freedom lovers then decided to wage an underground struggle against the Razakars.

However, for 13 months, the Razakars under Qasim Razvi, acting in the name of the Nizam, took over the administration and committed countless acts of atrocities, loot, arson, injustice, abduction of women, and rape against Hindus.

Qasim Razvi, originally a common lawyer from Latur, gained immense power as the leader of Ittehad. With the Razakars growing stronger alongside him, his main goal was to unite all Muslims and forcefully convert Hindus to Islam, making Hindus a minority in Hyderabad and fulfilling the Nizam's dream of an independent Islamic state. Razvi convinced the Nizam of this vision by promising power, and the Nizam, obsessed with retaining his rule, accepted Razvi's words as gospel.

Razvi grew so powerful that he could demote high-ranking officials who did not agree with him. He even directed the Nizam and his Prime Minister, Mir Laik Ali, turning them into his puppets. Speaking at a public meeting in Kalaburagi, Razvi declared that granting freedom to Muslims was against the will of Allah Huzur. Therefore, he said, Hindus who desired freedom should be made slaves. This statement revealed Razvi's deep hatred for Hindus. His arrogant and extreme words infuriated the Hindus and Congress workers of the Hyderabad State, including saints like Swami Ramanand Tirtha.

Swami Ramanand Tirtha and others protested Razvi's statements, asserting that Hyderabad was an inseparable part of India and that the Nizam should respect the majority's wishes and establish a representative government. This led to a clash of opinions between the Nizam's government and the Congress.

During this time, prominent freedom fighters in Hyderabad included Congress leaders like Janardhanrao Desai, Jagannathrao Chandraki, G.K. Praneshacharya, Dattatreya Rao Awadi, Sardar Sharangouda Inamdar, M. Nagappa, Shivamurthy Swami Alavandi, Acharya Narendraji, Ramachandra Veerappa, and Shukla. They directly engaged in the struggle against the Nizam government. Swami Ramanand Tirtha called for a massive collective movement against the Nizam, urging that if the Nizam did not agree to merge the Hyderabad State with the Indian Union, they should put their personal lives aside and risk their lives to fight him. Responding to Swami Ramanand Tirtha's call, Congress workers went to every village, raising awareness and pressuring the Nizam to integrate the Hyderabad State into the Indian Union. They held public meetings everywhere, awakening people from the shadows of fear and inspiring them to join the struggle.

The Nizam government, alarmed by this Congress-led movement, began arresting the protesters. Believing that arresting the key leaders would dampen the struggle, they first arrested Swami Ramanand Tirtha and other prominent leaders. On a single day, the Nizam government set a record by arresting 516 people. Contrary to their expectations, this did not dampen the movement. More groups emerged, with protesters taking to the streets across the entire Hyderabad State, raising the tricolor flag. Losing patience, the Nizam's police and Qasim Razvi's Razakars began brutalizing Hindus, looting their properties, and committing barbaric atrocities. They publicly tortured satyagrahis to instill fear. They broke into satyagrahis' homes, dragged out the women, and subjected them to horrific abuse. This only intensified the struggle rather than quelling it.

Not just Congress members, but also Arya Samaj, Hindu Mahasabha, and communists joined the fight against the Nizam, opposing the tyrannical administration. Many were ready to sacrifice their lives, and numerous martyrs fell to the bullets of the Razakars. Qasim Razvi's Razakar force sowed seeds of communal discord in rural areas where Hindus and Muslims coexisted harmoniously, provoking naive Muslims with the false promise that the Hyderabad region would become a southern Pakistan. Even today, the older generation recounts those bitter days, recalling how the Razakars' actions spread fear and discord.

The Excessive Atrocity

Today, the districts of Kalaburagi, Bidar, Raichur, and Koppal in Karnataka, known as Hyderabad Karnataka, were under the administration of the Nizams of Hyderabad. The struggle intensified in these districts as well. To suppress the uprising, military officer Qasim Razvi's soldiers (Razakars) committed atrocities, injustices, rapes, murders, looting, and plundering for 13 months, leaving the people in a state of terror. This period is described as an excessive avatar of atrocity.

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There is no count of the fighters who lost their lives during this time. When houses and shops were looted and entire villages were set ablaze, frightened people left their homes and sought refuge in camps for the displaced, set up by fighters around the Hyderabad region. Despite this, the fighters did not resort to violence. The struggle intensified only when Razakars began committing heinous acts such as abducting, raping, and murdering women.

The public, abandoning their fear for their lives, left their homes, took up arms, and directly engaged in the struggle. During this period, there were instances of Razakars being driven away. In those circumstances, defending one's honor became unavoidable.

Border Military Camps

To confront the Nizam's police and Razakars, freedom fighters established border military camps in villages of independent India surrounding the Hyderabad state. Such camps were set up in places like Sindagi, Dudhani, Gowdaganv, Madanhippargi, Tali Kota, Mundargi, Gadag, Vaggari, Tungabhadra, Gajendragad, Itagi, Kampli, Shirguppa, Mantralaya, and Kakkalameli, which belonged to Mumbai Karnataka and Madras Karnataka.

In these camps, individuals like Sharangouda Inamdar, Gurubhimrao Patil, Dharmaveer Raghuvanshi, Siddanna, Barrister Venkata Nayak, Apparao Advocate, A.V. Patil, Raghavendra Rao Guddada, M. Nagappa, Alavandi Shivamurti Swami, Virupakshappa, Pundalikappa Ishwarappa, R.V. Bidap, B. Mariyappa, G. Mahadevappa, Tirumalarav, Basanna Kunnur, and Dasarao Advocate were appointed as camp leaders. They engaged in infiltrating the Nizam's government, destroying police stations, and pushing back the Razakars. This period saw widespread struggles throughout Hyderabad, akin to a civil war or civilian uprising.

Border Police Forces

Freedom fighters set up camps at the borders and infiltrated fighters into the Hyderabad state. To counter them, Qasim Razvi established police stations and armed Razakars in every border area to prevent these infiltrations. Villagers were required to provide daily meals for these forces. The Razakars raided houses, taking whatever food supplies they wanted. They even took sheep and chickens from the poor for their food. This daily provision for the military forces became burdensome for the villagers. Additionally, as long as the Razakars were present, women could not step out of their homes. Many times, the Razakars would break into homes, abduct women, and commit heinous acts of mass rape. It became almost impossible for women to live with dignity in any village with a Razakar camp. Many families sent their women to distant relatives overnight for safety.

To protect the people, freedom fighter Sharangouda Inamdar prepared a group to fight back with guns and declared war against the Razakars. The Nizam government announced a reward for anyone who captured Sharangouda. However, no one turned him in; instead, everyone helped him. Sharangouda would attack the police stations at the borders, destroy them, and push back the Razakars. There were several direct confrontations between Sharangouda's forces and the Razakars, leading the Razakars to flee in fear. The Nizam government was in disarray because of this.

Armed Razakars and police forces raided the villages of Gorta and Muchalambi in the Bidar district, surrounding them so no one could leave. They carried out a massacre, shooting and killing anyone they saw. They looted houses and set fire to those who did not open their doors, burning the inhabitants alive. Even more horrifying were the inhumane, demonic acts the Razakars committed in these villages. The men of the village were gathered in one place, and the women were stripped and subjected to brutal torture. The behavior of the Razakars and the police reached the peak of obscenity. Writing about these events is shameful. Such heinous acts were perpetrated by the Razakars. These incidents continued from morning until evening. When the tied-up men protested, they were tortured, mutilated, and shot dead. This can be recorded as one of the greatest tragedies in the entire Hyderabad liberation struggle. Such a disaster had not occurred anywhere else. The Razakars, sensing their end was near, committed this atrocious act mercilessly. Hundreds of people were burned alive, and this matter was brought to the attention of the Indian government. Such incidents began to occur continuously in many villages of the Bidar district. Losing patience, the people of the Bidar district united and stood up against the Razakars. Arya Samaj and Hindu Mahasabha organizations fought bravely against the Razakars. Many lost their lives, but some, becoming martyrs, started killing many Razakars. As people began to retaliate, fear struck the Razakars, and their tyranny subsided to some extent.

The news of these horrific incidents in the Bidar district spread to the Kalaburagi district, causing fear among the people. The Razakars attempted to create similar chaos in Kalaburagi, Aland, Chittapur, Afzalpur, Jewargi, Surpur, and Shahapur taluks. Sharangouda received intelligence about these plans from informants. He immediately toured the villages at night, urging people to resist the Razakars, protect their women, and not be afraid to sacrifice their lives. He assured them of his support and asked them to inform him immediately if they received any news.

In Nelogi village of Jewargi taluk, the Nizam government had a police station. The police there, along with the Razakars, were planning to raid Jeratgi village in the same taluk to loot valuables. The villagers informed Sharangouda about this. Sharangouda and his associates first went to Moratgi to prepare and then camped about a kilometer outside Jeratgi. Observing the situation from afar, they waited for the Razakars. Knowing that Sharangouda's forces were coming, the Razakars also prepared for them. However, even after nightfall, Sharangouda's forces did not arrive, leading the Razakars to believe they were scared. The Razakars then started raiding houses and molesting women. At this point, Sharangouda's forces attacked the village, causing the Razakars to retreat to a temple. The villagers, emboldened by

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Sharangouda's presence, dragged the Razakars out of the temple and beat them up. The Razakars then fled, abandoning their loot.

During this time, R.R. Diwakar was the broadcasting minister at the center. His relatives lived in Kummanasirasgi on the banks of the Bhima River in Vijayapura district. Diwakar and his family had come to visit them. Learning that the police had arrived, the Razakars assumed they had come to attack them and set out with armed men towards Kummanasirasgi. Before the Razakars reached Kummanasirasgi, the villagers of Bagalur mistook it for Kummanasirasgi and pelted the Razakars with stones from the rooftops, causing them to flee. Diwakar, upon hearing of this incident, visited the villagers and assured them that the Indian government would provide police protection. He immediately directed the Mumbai government to send police forces. Within two days, armed police arrived at the border villages, provided training to the villagers, and formed a civilian police force.

In Surapura taluk's Agni village, there was a Nizam police station. The station officer, under some pretext or another, would intimidate and extort money from the villagers, causing harassment to the innocent people. He would summon people who had no involvement in any matters to the station, accuse them of having connections with the liberation fighters, and claim they were helping the fighters. This news reached Sharanagouda Inamdar, the commander of the border camp, through informants. Gowda, along with his companions, went to Peerapura, picked up Virupaksha Gowda, and arrived at Agni village. It was nighttime. The police were in deep sleep. Taking advantage of the situation, they attacked the station. The police, unable to comprehend the sudden attack, fled in the dark, just hoping to survive. Around four in the morning, all those who had been unlawfully detained were released.

Everywhere, Sharanagouda was humiliating the Razakars and police, making them a laughingstock. Consequently, the Nizam's police from the stations of Yadrami, Kembhavi, and Shahapur formed a team and started a search operation to capture him. At the same time, the Sharanabasaveshwar Jatre was taking place in Aralagundagi. They calculated that Sharanagouda would definitely come there, making it easy to capture him, so they deployed a large number of armed policemen. All these activities and plans of the police were conveyed to Gowda through informants from the villages of Golageri, Allapur, and Malli. Therefore, the police could not catch Gowda.

In Yadgir, Jagannathrao Chandraki and Kolur Mallappa were inspiring people in the districts of Kalaburagi, Raichur, and Koppal to revolt against the Nizam government. These movements were carried out non-violently. However, due to immense public support, it was difficult for the Nizam government to oppose them. On the other hand, Sharanagouda and the leaders of Arya Samaj and Hindu Mahasabha faced the bullets of the Razakars with armed struggle, and as they drove the Razakars back, people gained courage and started rebelling against the Razakars. The number of Nizam police and Razakars was not sufficient to deal with this situation. Therefore, the Nizam police started luring goons with money to achieve their goals. Once these goons received police protection, they began looting everywhere, leaving their assigned tasks. They even looted police houses and started using stolen weapons for their goon activities. The strategy employed by the Nizam police backfired on them. The camps received messages through informants about the goons trying to capture Sharanagouda and also about the goons looting the people at will. When they learned about this, the fighters began preparing to tackle the police, goons, and Razakars simultaneously. Sharanagouda and his companions set up a camp near Vaganagere with weapons. The police were waiting for them to come at night, but they decided to enter the village from another route. Until morning, no one came, so the Razakars and police began wandering around the village, shooting recklessly. The villagers waiting outside for Gowda became terrified and started fleeing. In this chaos, around ten villagers were killed by Razakar bullets. Seeing no benefit in waiting any longer, Gowda's team attacked the Razakars. The Razakars, who were rejoicing over killing innocent people, were suddenly taken by surprise by a barrage of bullets, dropped their weapons, and fled. The fighters chased down and shot those who were escaping after killing innocent people. The Razakars, who had believed no one could oppose them, lost their lives in this attack.

The public gained confidence in the fighters who protected the people's honor and lives by eradicating the Razakars. People realized that only by helping these fighters could they achieve freedom and liberation from the Razakars. They started freely aiding these fighter groups with money and grains. Additionally, whenever there was trouble from Razakars or even the suspicion of potential trouble, villagers would call upon these armed fighters. Villagers would arrange for food and shelter for them in secret locations. As the days passed, the camp's resistance intensified. Supplies for the struggle were brought from places like Mumbai and distributed to the public, encouraging them to fight against the Razakars.

In response, the Razakars incited local Muslims against the Hindus, painting the struggle against the Nizam government as a struggle against Islam. They called for Jihad (holy war), asking all Muslims to prepare for a religious war. They summoned Muslims to the police station and incited them. Consequently, some fanatics among the otherwise peaceful local Muslims joined the Razakars in direct participation in the loot and started behaving like station officers themselves in each village. During this time, the Razakars poisoned the bond between Hindus and Muslims, leading to civil strife. Some local Muslims began to boast that this area would become a "South Pakistan." If any elder Muslim leaders tried to advise them, they were labeled as traitors to Islam and threatened with ostracism.

As this civil strife continued, the Nizam police and Razakars realized they were outnumbered by the majority Hindus. Despite this awareness, Kasim Razvi's reckless adventurism led to the sacrifice of innocent Muslims. Many poor, innocent Muslims fell

ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 11| November 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

victim to Kasim Razvi's deceit, leaving their families orphaned. Despite this, they couldn't subdue the Hindus. Consequently, Kasim Razvi began calling in Rohillas (those who carry out executions) from Lucknow and Kanpur and Pathans from Afghanistan, arming them to suppress the fighters. This angered the local Muslims who felt betrayed by Razvi, leading to a lack of cooperation with the Pathans. The Pathans, too, didn't trust the local Muslims and started looting and raiding everywhere.

Razvi instructed the Pathans to instill fear in the Hindus and create an atmosphere where no one dared to speak against the Nizam government. However, the Pathans began looting not only Hindus but also wealthy Muslim households, leading to further discontent. Both Hindu and Muslim communities stood against the Nizam police and Razakars. The state of Hyderabad became an example of anarchy, with the rulers themselves committing injustices and atrocities against the people. Protests against the administration were rampant, with daily arrests and killings becoming commonplace.

During this time, a young heroic soldier from Rajan Kolur village in Surapur taluka, Virupakshappa Gowda, fought against the Razakars with a gun alongside Sharanagouda. Though the only son of his household, he became a martyr in the struggle against the Razakars. The Razakars deceitfully shot him from behind.

Virupakshappa Gowda was not an ordinary man. In his exuberant youth, he was a lion's nightmare for the Razakars, ensuring they didn't cross Hunasagi. Even when stationed at the Hunasagi camp, the Razakars and Nizam police lived in constant fear of his attacks, unable to sleep day or night. They had announced a reward for anyone who could capture him alive. However, due to his patriotism and valiant fight, the villagers around lived in peace and respect, and they would never forget him. No one dared to undertake the risky act of handing him over. Yet, the Razakars, after bribing local Muslims, located him and surrounded the hill where he was hiding. Roaring like a tiger, Gowda, forgetting his own danger, shot and killed many Razakars. Eventually, he fell to a bullet shot from behind.

To honor this freedom fighter and martyr Virupakshappa Gowda, his statue was erected. The state government also named the Rajan Kolur Tunnel Canal, part of the Narayanpur Left Bank Main Canal of the Krishna Upper Canal Project, after him. After his death, the Razakars, filled with arrogance, invaded Rajan Kolur and surrounding villages for the first time, engaging in rampant plunder. They accused everyone they saw of being Virupakshappa Gowda's followers and tormented them. Their atrocities escalated until Sharanagouda and his comrades from the Talikoti camp arrived and drove them back.

On one hand, Gandhian followers intensified their struggle through non-violent satyagraha and willingly went to jail. On the other hand, Arya Samajists and Hindu Mahasabha's civilian soldiers took up arms against the Razakars, risking their lives. Intelligence units were set up in the border camps to report on the activities of the Nizam's government and its forces. Based on these reports, armed fighters in the border camps launched attacks, pushing back the police and Razakars.

People who had lost their homes and properties due to the Razakars' violence fled the Hyderabad state as refugees. These refugees were given shelter in border camps, where they were provided with food, accommodation, and medical treatment. As violence increased and the entire region turned into a riot-like situation, leaders such as Swami Ramananda Tirtha, Dr. G.S. Melukote, and Digambar Rao Bindu were released on bail from jail to negotiate with the government. However, the government was unwilling to compromise.

Swami Ramananda Tirtha, president of the Hyderabad Congress, demanded complete independence, the establishment of a responsible government, and the merger of the Hyderabad state into independent India. He issued a 15-day ultimatum to the Nizam's government, warning that the struggle would intensify if these demands were not met. He then visited all the refugee camps, witnessed their suffering, and was deeply moved. Being a sanyasi and a firm believer in non-violence, he wept and urged the camp members and fighters to cease all killings and atrocities, stating that armed struggle was not their way.

Swami Ramananda Tirtha traveled to Delhi to meet Gandhi and later met with Prime Minister Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru and Deputy Prime Minister Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, explaining the anarchy and dire conditions in the Hyderabad state. Nehru suggested making Hyderabad a unique state, but Patel, present at the time, asserted that friendship with the wicked was impossible.

Meanwhile, the Nizam contacted Pakistan for military and arms assistance, which was relayed to the camps through border intelligence. Sensing the urgency, Swami Ramananda Tirtha and other prominent leaders rushed to Delhi to inform Patel. Enraged, Patel deemed this behavior intolerable and decided on military action without waiting for Nehru, who was in London.

General J.N. Chaudhuri led the Indian Army from Solapur, prepared to enter the Hyderabad state. Upon learning of this, the Razakars panicked. As Indian army aircraft began flying over Hyderabad, the Razakars mistook them for Pakistani reinforcements. Simultaneously, the Indian infantry, with tanks, approached from Naladurg. The Razakars, alongside the Nizam's police and soldiers, gathered with weapons at Naladurg Fort to confront the Indian army.

The Indian troops, aware of the fort's occupation through intelligence, did not attack during the day but waited until midnight. They strapped batteries to donkeys, sending them up the hill around the fort. Mistaking the donkeys for Indian soldiers, the Nizam's troops fired a barrage of bullets at them. With no return fire, they believed the Indian soldiers had either been killed or fled, and began celebrating.

When the Nizam's army was joyously celebrating their performance, around four o'clock in the morning, the Indian Army attacked the Golconda Fort. Due to the Nizam's army's

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inability to fight back, many soldiers lost their lives. The remaining soldiers surrendered to the Indian Army with their weapons. Upon hearing this news, the leader of the Razakars, Kasim Razvi, was deeply disturbed. He cried out against the Indian Army, calling for the massacre of all Hindus and declared 'Kill them all'. Just after Friday afternoon prayers, orders were given to begin the killings. While mass murder and looting occurred in some places, orders were issued to set fire to entire villages in others.

Meanwhile, news arrived from Pakistan that Prime Minister Mohammad Ali Jinnah had died. This news greatly encouraged Kasim Razvi, who had been causing all this harm. After his death, Kasim Razvi's gang fell apart. That night, the Indian Army launched an operation against Hyderabad, causing fear to spread everywhere. Public outrage and violence erupted against Razakars and police who supported them. They were brought onto the streets and punished. With widespread public support, the Indian Army's operation proceeded smoothly without any major difficulties. When Indian troops entered Hyderabad, they were welcomed warmly everywhere. People performed their rituals and respected the army. When the Indian Army proceeded through Basavakalyan and Humnabad towards Hyderabad, another contingent moved towards Bidar via Aurangabad. As news of the Indian Army's entry into Hyderabad spread like wildfire, fear gripped everywhere. The Hindu citizens who had suffered violence, robbery, injustice, and atrocities at the hands of Razakars, attacked and captured them wherever they found them. They handed over Razakars and police to the army. The Indian Army gained widespread public support everywhere, making their operation in Hyderabad very easy and smooth.

When the Nizam declared his surrender on September 17, 1948, he assured the public through a radio broadcast that he would hand over the Hyderabad State Army to India and maintain peace among all district officers. This announcement eased the tension among those who had endured violence and maintained discipline. People from all over Hyderabad rejoiced in the streets, waving the tricolor flag. Especially in cities, thousands of people marched in processions on the streets. During this period, there were incidents of violence and killings against Razakars. For about five days, Razakars, who were hiding everywhere, were hunted down. The army captured these Razakars, seized their weapons, and pacified the public.

The liberation struggle led by the Nizam's government released freedom fighters and civilians. Later, when Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel arrived in Hyderabad, the Nizam himself came to the airport, saluted him, and welcomed Patel. Then they hoisted the Indian tricolor. This is history. Whatever the form of struggle or conflict, the victory achieved is significant in independent India. Leading this struggle was Swami Ramananda Tirtha. However, countless people fought against the Razakars and sacrificed themselves. Many fought inspired by their own volition and laid down their lives. In Kalaburagi jail, Bhimasena Rao Desai began a satyagraha, where police pushed him to death with boot kicks. Many such incidents remain undocumented. Journalist B.V. Desai published the Democratic newspaper from Kalaburagi jail. In it, R.R. Divakar, Janardhana Rao Desai, Raghujagirdar, and Professor Bhavu Saheb Devulagankar wrote articles, awakening the people. This newspaper circulated secretly. Those who risked their lives to publish this newspaper did more than just speak out. Sardar Sharangouda protected people's honor and lives. Even now, elderly women in old turbans sing songs in his praise.

Surapura's Bhyarspar Venkatappa Nayak, Apparav Advocate, as soon as the Indian army entered Surapura town, successfully incited the Razakars. In Koppal, Shiva Murthy Swami Alvandi and his companions, in Raichur, M. Nagappa and his associates, all left their homes for years and sacrificed their lives for the country. They guided the fighters. Although all these battles took place, no one was against the Nizam and Muslims. It was against his administration and Kasim Razvi's feudal rule. No one tried to make it public.

If the Hyderabad liberation struggle had not taken place, Hyderabad might have become part of South Pakistan, like a constant cancer inside India's belly. Considering the current division of the country, it is difficult to predict the consequences if Hyderabad province had also become South Pakistan. Contemplating all this, Swami Ramananda Tirtha vowed not to let Hyderabad province become South Pakistan and sang in protest. Moreover, he played a significant role in dividing Hyderabad province, which was a major accomplishment.

When Hyderabad state was integrated, they did not gain anything politically. Instead, despite knowing that distancing themselves politically would be more beneficial, they relinquished their political interests. Swami Ramananda Tirtha advanced towards the creation of linguistic states. The fundamental intention behind their decision was that if Hyderabad was left as it was, there was a possibility it would rise again religiously in the future. Hence, they proceeded to divide Hyderabad state into linguistic states. Although Nehru did not initially approve, he eventually accepted their decision to divide Hyderabad into linguistic states. That is why Hyderabad stands peacefully today. This could be said to be the main reason. No one would deny the liberation struggle history of Hyderabad, which has been a legacy of the country's interests. However, due to the struggle against the Nizam's rule, today, if the liberation of Hyderabad is celebrated, it causes grief to the minds of Muslims. This can damage their political interests. The history of this struggle, which continued for the last 58 years, continues to be displayed in a manner that obscures it. However, in reality, the struggle was not against the Nizam but against the religious fanaticism of Kasim Razvi. Even today, freedom fighters call this struggle a revolt against the Raja's rule, not the Nizam. Elders also say that the actual battle was against Kasim Razvi and his fanatics.

Under these circumstances, why did the celebration of Hyderabad liberation occur in the past? If the liberation struggle of Hyderabad in Indian independence is not documented, it becomes an incomplete and lifeless history. All Chief Ministers have previously participated in the celebration of Hyderabad's liberation. Although it has been known as a significant event, it

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has become a great misfortune for not giving importance to this national festival.

In 1998, the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the liberation of Hyderabad were decided by the former Prime Minister, P.V. Narasimha Rao. It was determined to celebrate the Golden Jubilee of liberation in the former Hyderabad state regions of Karnataka, Maharashtra, and Hyderabad itself. On that occasion, Chief Minister J.H. Patel, who was then the Chief Minister of Karnataka, ordered the observance of Hyderabad Liberation Day annually by the government. Even then, Patel faced strong opposition to conducting the flag hoisting ceremony in Kalaburagi. The occasion of the Golden Jubilee celebrations of the liberation of Hyderabad was decided to establish a statue in honor of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel in Kalaburagi, the central place of Hyderabad Karnataka. The District Panchayat, Urban Development Authority, and Municipal Corporation all consented to this. The statue of Sardar Patel arrived in Kalaburagi on October 17, 1998, to be installed as a symbol for the Golden Jubilee celebrations. However, several organizations instigated by Muslim organizations and political interests opposed the installation of the statue. In a public meeting in front of a state minister, Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was insulted as a murderer. This incident demonstrated cowardice as the ministers remained silent in response. Nevertheless, Chief Minister J.H. Patel did not yield to these threats. The entire Hyderabad Karnataka population stood in support of him. Despite successful opposition to preventing the installation of the statue on the day of the Golden Jubilee celebrations, some people went to court, delaying the establishment of the statue. A month later, the statue of Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel was installed.

Previously, even the Nizam had to declare the Hyderabad region as an independent state and send a Hindu person as an ambassador to the United Nations. In the meantime, Sardar Patel, through his operations, liberated the Hyderabad province from monarchical rule and integrated it into the Union of Independent India.

During the installation of Sardar Patel's statue in Kalaburagi, attempts were made to portray Hindus as opposing the statue by putting many Hindu individuals forward in protest. This is an unforgettable event in history. A struggle had to be waged even to install this statue. Are Sardar Vallabhbhai Patel, who fought for the country's independence and was a key figure in the liberation of Hyderabad, considered criminals? It can be said that having to fight for the installation of a national leader's statue in independent India is a very bitter incident. Although the Hyderabad liberation was a model struggle in the freedom movement, even today, there are systematic efforts to distance Muslims from the liberation.

Giving significance to this important day, which is often neglected by political leaders, young Chief Minister Kumaraswamy visited Kalaburagi, the central seat of Hyderabad Karnataka, and became the first Chief Minister to hoist the Hyderabad Liberation Flag after 58 years of liberation. On this occasion, he honored freedom fighters and declared it a national festival. Not only that, he invited Prince Fazal Jah Jang Bahadur, the son of the Nizam, and honored him, marking the beginning of a new history.

Prince Fazal Jah Bahadur Jang of the Nizam lineage called on everyone to forget the bitterness of the past and look forward to better days. The descendants of the Nizam, who abdicated their throne, do not oppose the celebration of the liberation day. So, what is the purpose behind the recent opposition by a few when there was never any opposition before? Isn't it just opportunistic politics? Although many political parties were troubled by this event, September 17, 2006, stands as an unforgettable day when a new history was created. It can be said to be a day that paid respect to the spirits of the freedom fighters.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the Hyderabad Liberation Struggle of 1948 was a pivotal event in India's history, marking the decisive assertion of India's unity and secular fabric against the autocratic rule of the Nizam and the fanaticism of Kasim Razvi's Razakars. Led by visionary leaders like Swami Ramananda Tirtha, the movement not only prevented Hyderabad from becoming a South Pakistan but also laid the groundwork for reorganizing states along linguistic lines, ensuring lasting peace and stability in the region. Despite the historical importance of the liberation, controversies and political sensitivities around its commemoration continue to persist. Addressing these gaps in understanding and commemorating the struggle will help provide a comprehensive view of this crucial historical episode in shaping India's diverse socio-cultural landscape.

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ISSN (Online): 2455-3662
EPRA International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research (IJMR) - Peer Reviewed Journal
Volume: 11| Issue: 11| November 2025|| Journal DOI: 10.36713/epra2013 || SJIF Impact Factor 2025: 8.691 || ISI Value: 1.188

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